

# 6 Waiting times for elective surgery

## Introduction

This chapter presents national statistics for elective surgery waiting times for the years 2002–03 to 2006–07, and a state and territory overview of elective surgery waiting times for 2006–07. Information on the number of days waited at the 50th and 90th percentiles by patients admitted from waiting lists for elective surgery, the proportion of patients waiting greater than 365 days, and the number of patients admitted is presented by public hospital peer group. Information is also included by the specialty of the surgeon who was to perform the elective surgery and by indicator procedure.

The 50th percentile (the median or the middle value in a group of data arranged from lowest to highest value for days waited) represents the number of days within which 50% of patients were admitted; half the waiting times will have been shorter, and half the waiting times longer, than the median. The 90th percentile data represent the number of days within which 90% of patients were admitted. The 50th and 90th percentiles have been rounded to the nearest number of days.

The data cover public hospitals only, except as noted below in the description of the coverage of the data collection.

The waiting times data presented here for patients who complete their wait and are admitted for their surgery on an elective basis are generally used as the main summary measure of elective surgery waiting times. Most patients are admitted after waiting; however, some patients are removed from waiting lists for other reasons. Other reasons for removal are that the patient: was admitted as an emergency patient for the awaited procedure; was transferred to another hospital's waiting list; had been treated elsewhere; was not contactable; had died, or had declined surgery. Information on time spent on waiting lists is therefore also presented for those reasons for removals.

The number of patients added to waiting lists and the number of patients removed from waiting lists for admission or other reasons are also presented in this chapter. This provides information about the movement of patients onto and off waiting lists.

*National health data dictionary* definitions (HDSC 2006) are the basis of the National Elective Surgery Waiting Times Data Collection (see Chapter 1) and are summarised in the glossary. However, some of the definitions used varied slightly among the states and territories in 2006–07 and in comparison with previous reporting periods. Comparisons between jurisdictions and between 2006–07 and previous reporting periods should therefore be made with reference to the notes on the definitions used and to previous reports (AIHW 2003, 2004a, 2005a, 2006a, 2007a).

## Variation in methods to calculate waiting times

Waiting times were generally calculated by comparing the date on which a patient was added to a waiting list with the date that the patient was removed. Days on which a patient was 'not ready for care' were excluded.

For reporting periods before the 2004–05 collection period, South Australia used a different method from other states and territories to calculate waiting times for patients who changed clinical urgency category. However, from the 2004–05 reporting period, South Australia has been able to report waiting times as per the agreed national standard for calculating waiting times, that is:

Counting the time waited in the most recent urgency category plus any time waited in more urgent categories, e.g. time waiting in category 2, plus time spent previously in category 1.

This would have the effect of decreasing the apparent waiting time for South Australian admissions in 2004–05 and last years compared with previous reporting periods. In previous periods South Australia counted the waiting time in all urgency categories.

## Transfers between waiting lists

In some states and territories, for patients who were transferred from a waiting list managed by one hospital to that managed by another, the time waited on the first list is not included in the waiting time reported to the National Elective Surgery Waiting Times Data Collection. Therefore, the number of days waited in those jurisdictions reflects the waiting time on the list managed by the reporting hospital only. This has the effect of shortening the reported waiting time compared with the time actually waited by these patients.

New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory were able to report the total time waited on all waiting lists. This could have the effect of increasing the reported waiting time for admissions in these states and territories compared with other jurisdictions. Queensland has indicated that it is uncommon for patients to be transferred from a waiting list managed by one public hospital to that managed by another in those jurisdictions.

## Waiting times and other data elements reported for elective surgery

Figure 6.1 presents data on patients admitted to hospital from elective surgery waiting lists for surgery performed by a doctor whose area of clinical expertise is *Plastic surgery*. The information presented by indicator procedure and public hospital peer groups is sourced from the National Elective Surgery Waiting Times Data Collection. The other information provided in Figure 6.1 was available for records where the data for elective surgery waiting times could be linked to the National Hospital Morbidity Database, thus allowing waiting times information for patients to be related to other information about their admission for elective surgery. For the 2006–07 collection year, all states and territories provided elective surgery waiting times data linkable to the National Hospital Morbidity Database. New South Wales provided 97.0% of elective surgery records linked, Victoria 95.1%, Queensland 100.0%, Western Australia 97.4 %, South Australia 99.6%, Tasmania 69.8%, the Australian Capital Territory 44.7% and the Northern Territory 62.6%.

For 2006–07, Australia-wide:

- there were 38,675 admissions from elective surgery waiting lists for surgery performed by a doctor whose area of clinical expertise is *Plastic surgery*

- the median waiting time for these patients was 28 days
- 3.6% of these patients waited more than 365 days for admission
- almost all admissions from elective surgery waiting lists for surgery performed by doctors in this surgical specialty were not for specific Indicator procedure.

For National Elective Surgery Waiting Times Data Collection data linked to the National Hospital Morbidity Database data:

- there were 38,766 admissions from elective surgery waiting lists for *Plastic surgery* and these accounted for 70,261 patient days
- the average length of stay was 1.9 days
- the most common procedure (other than *Cerebral anaesthesia*) reported to the National Hospital Morbidity Database was *Excision of lesion of skin and subcutaneous tissue* (Block 1620)
- the most common principal diagnosis reported was *Other malignant neoplasms of skin* (C44), followed by *Fracture at wrist and hand level* (S62)
- the most common AR-DRG reported was *Other skin, subcutaneous tissue and breast procedures* (J11Z)
- the age group with the highest proportion of separations was 75–84 years and there were more separations for males than females
- 98.4% of these episodes had a separation mode of *Other*, suggesting that these patients went home after separation from hospital.

## State and territory overview

### Coverage

The National Elective Surgery Waiting Times Data Collection covers public acute hospitals only. However, some public patients treated under contract in private hospitals in Victoria and Tasmania are included.

The data collection covered most public hospitals that undertake elective surgery. Tables 6.1 and 6.2 show that coverage of the collection (as indicated by the proportion of hospitals included) was highest for the *Principal referral and Specialist women's and children's hospitals* peer group with 82 hospitals reported in this peer group. The collection covered 30 hospitals in the *Large hospitals* peer group, and 52 hospitals in the *Medium hospitals* peer group. Hospitals that were not included may not actually undertake elective surgery, may not have had waiting lists, or may have had different waiting list characteristics compared with reporting hospitals. Some smaller remote hospitals may have different patterns of service delivery compared with other hospitals because specialists providing elective surgery services visit these hospitals only periodically.

Tables 6.1 and 6.2 also present estimates of the proportions of elective surgery admissions that were covered by the National Elective Surgery Waiting Times Data Collection. The AIHW derived these estimates from data provided by the states and territories for the National Hospital Morbidity Database as:

The number of separations with Urgency of admission reported as *Elective* and a surgical procedure for public hospitals reporting to the National Elective Surgery Waiting Times Data Collection as a proportion of the number of separations with Urgency of admission reported as *Elective* and a surgical procedure for all public hospitals.

Separations for cosmetic surgery were excluded from the estimated coverage calculations. The definition of 'surgical procedure' used for these estimates is detailed in the Glossary and based on the procedures used to define 'surgical' in *Australian refined diagnosis related groups version 5.1* (DoHA 2004b). Information about 'urgency of admission' is detailed in Chapter 7.

Based on this measure, coverage was highest for the *Principal referral and Specialist women's and children's hospitals* peer group at about 98%, and was progressively lower for the *Large hospitals* and *Medium hospitals* groups (Table 6.1). Overall coverage of the National Elective Surgery Waiting Times Data Collection was about 87% in 2006–07, and ranged from 100% in New South Wales, Tasmania, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory to 64% in South Australia (Table 6.2).

## Admissions from waiting lists for elective surgery

Overall, there were 556,770 admissions from waiting lists (26.7 per 1,000 population) in 2006–07, compared with 556,951 (27.2 per 1,000 population) in 2005–06 (Table 6.1).

Hospitals in the *Principal referral and Specialist women's and children's hospitals* peer group accounted for 70.9% of admissions from elective surgery waiting lists in 2006–07, compared with 69.3% in 2005–06. Another 15.9% were reported for hospitals in the *Large hospitals* peer group in 2006–07, compared with 17.6% in 2005–06. In 2006–07 and 2005–06, 11.4% of admissions were in the *Medium hospitals* peer group.

## Distribution of waiting times

Overall, the median waiting time for patients who were admitted from waiting lists was 32 days in 2006–07, 32 days in 2005–06, 29 days in 2004–05 and 28 days in 2003–04 and 2002–03 (Table 6.1). In 2006–07, the median waiting time for patients admitted from waiting lists for hospitals in the *Principal referral and Specialist women's and children's hospitals* peer group (30 days) was shorter than for the *Large hospitals* and *Medium hospitals* peer groups (33 days and 39 days respectively) (Table 6.1). In 2006–07, the median waiting time ranged from 25 days in Queensland to 63 days in the Australian Capital Territory (Table 6.2).

In 2006–07, 90% of patients were admitted within 226 days, compared with 237 days in 2005–06, 217 days in 2004–05, 193 days in 2003–04 and 197 days in 2002–03. In 2006–07, the 90th percentile for waiting time ranged from 142 days in Queensland to 370 days in the Northern Territory (Table 6.2).

## Proportion waiting more than 365 days

Overall, the proportion of patients admitted after waiting more than 365 days was 3.1% in 2006–07, compared with 4.6% in 2005–06, 4.8% in 2004–05, 3.9% in 2003–04 and 4.0% in 2002–03 (Table 6.1). In 2006–07, this proportion ranged from 1.9% in New South Wales to 10.2% in the Northern Territory (Table 6.2).

In the *Principal referral and Specialist women's and children's hospitals* peer group in 2006–07, 3.4% of patients were admitted after waiting more than 365 days, as were 2.7% of patients in the *Large hospitals* peer group, and 1.7% of patients in the *Medium hospitals* peer group.

## Additions to and removals from waiting lists

Table 6.3 shows the movement of patients on and off waiting lists in 2006–07. This includes data on the total number of patients added to and removed from waiting lists, the distribution of days waited by patients removed from waiting lists and the proportion of patients waiting more than 365 days before being removed from waiting lists.

In 2006–07 a total of 734,715 patients were added to elective surgery waiting lists and 650,973 patients were removed from elective surgery waiting lists, whether they were admitted for the procedure they were waiting for or were removed for other reasons. In 2006–07, only Victoria, Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory reported removals from waiting lists for transfer to another hospital's waiting list. This could have an effect of reducing the waiting times reported for overall removals for those three jurisdictions relative to others.

*Elective admissions* accounted for the most removals from waiting lists in 2006–07 (85.5%), ranging from 78.9% in the Northern Territory to 87.7% in Queensland. *Surgery not required or declined* accounted for 7.3% of removals following admission as elective patients. A further 3.2% of removals (21,015 patients) were *Treated elsewhere*, 1.4% (9,036) were *Not contactable/died*, and 0.9% (5,909) were *Emergency admissions*.

## Distribution of waiting times

Overall, the reason for removal category with the shortest median waiting time in 2006–07 was *Emergency admission* (1 day), and the category with longest median waiting time was *Not contactable/died* (169 days) (Table 6.3).

As was the case with median waiting times, the reason for removal category with the shortest waiting time by which 90% of patients were removed was *Emergency admission* (71 days) and the category with the longest waiting time was *Not reported* (692 days). The length of time by which 90% of patients were removed from waiting lists varied substantially between states and territories in most reason for removal categories. For example, waiting times at the 90th percentile in the *Emergency admission* category ranged from 19 days in Queensland to 638 days in the Northern Territory.

## Proportion waiting more than 365 days

In 2006–07 the reason for removal category with the lowest proportion of patients waiting more than 365 days before removal was *Emergency admission* (1.0%) and the category with the highest proportion was *Not reported* (24.6%) (Table 6.3).

The proportion of patients waiting more than 365 days differed substantially between states and territories in 2006–07. Overall, it ranged from 2.4% in New South Wales to 17.5% in the Northern Territory. For the removal category *Not contactable or died* it ranged from 8.0% in New South Wales to 47.1% in the Australian Capital Territory.

## Specialty of surgeon

Table 6.4 shows the number of admissions from waiting lists, the distribution of days waited and the proportion of admissions where people waited more than 365 days in 2006–07. These data are presented by the specialty of the surgeon who was to perform the surgery and by state and territory.

### Distribution of waiting times

*Ophthalmology* and *Orthopaedic surgery* were the surgical specialties with the longest median waiting times in 2006–07 (71 and 50 days respectively). All other surgical specialties except *Ear, nose and throat surgery* had median waiting times of less than 30 days; *Cardio-thoracic surgery* had the shortest median waiting time (12 days) (Table 6.4).

There was a marked variation between states and territories in the median waiting time for *Ophthalmology*, with 50% of patients being admitted within 34 days in Queensland and within 255 days in the Northern Territory. There was less variation between states and territories in the median waiting time for *Urology*, with waiting times ranging from 19 days in Western Australia to 52 days in the Australian Capital Territory.

The length of time by which 90% of patients had been admitted also varied by surgical specialty in 2006–07, from 66 days for *Cardio-thoracic surgery* to 318 days for both *Ophthalmology* and *Orthopaedic surgery*.

### Proportion waiting more than 365 days

*Orthopaedic surgery* and *Ear, nose and throat surgery* were the specialties with the highest proportion of patients who waited more than 365 days to be admitted (6.0% and 5.5% respectively) (Table 6.4). *Cardio-thoracic surgery* had the lowest proportion of patients who waited more than 365 days (0.1%).

There was marked variation among the states and territories in the proportion of patients who waited more than 365 days to be admitted for some surgical specialties. For example, 1.1% of patients admitted for *Ophthalmology* in 2006–07 waited more than 365 days in Victoria, compared with 36.3% of patients in the Northern Territory.

### Admissions from waiting lists

Nationally, admissions from waiting lists were highest for the specialty of *General surgery* (139,655) and lowest for *Neurosurgery* (10,944) (Table 6.4). Admissions from waiting lists were also highest for *General surgery* across all jurisdictions. The surgical specialty with the lowest number of admissions varied across states and territories from *Neurosurgery* (New South Wales and Queensland), *Vascular surgery* (Victoria and Western Australia), *Other* (South Australia and Tasmania), *Cardio-thoracic surgery* (the Australian Capital Territory) and *Plastic surgery* (Northern Territory).

## Indicator procedures

Indicator procedures are procedures which are of high volume and are often associated with long waits. Table 6.5 shows state and territory data on the distribution of days waited by

patients admitted from waiting lists by indicator procedure. These data include the proportion of patients who waited more than 365 days to be admitted from waiting lists and the total number of patients admitted from waiting lists for elective surgery in 2006–07, by Indicator procedure.

## **Distribution of waiting times**

Nationally, the Indicator procedure with the lowest median waiting time in 2006–07 was *Coronary artery bypass graft* (17 days) and the one with the highest median waiting time was *Total knee replacement* (162 days) (Table 6.5).

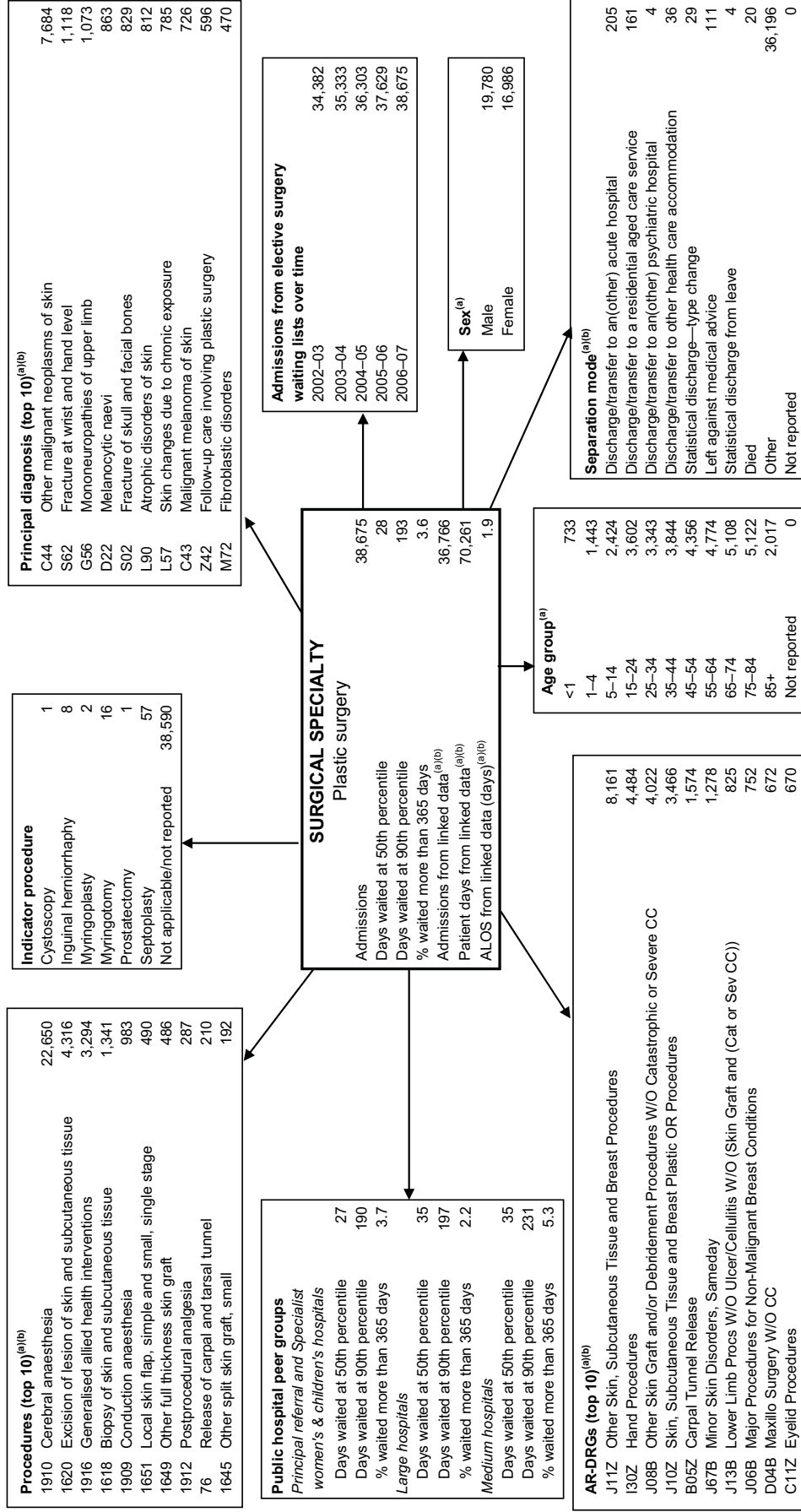
There was marked variation among the states and territories in the median waiting time for *Myringoplasty*, ranging from 62 days in both Victoria and Queensland to 440 days in the Northern Territory.

The length of time by which 90% of patients had been admitted also varied by Indicator procedure, from 88 days for *Coronary artery bypass graft* to 426 days for *Varicose veins stripping & ligation*.

## **Admissions from waiting lists**

Overall, 32.9% of patients admitted for elective surgery had been waiting for one of the indicator procedures. There was some variation among the states and territories: the Australian Capital Territory had the highest proportion of admissions for the indicator procedures (39.0%) and the Northern Territory had the lowest proportion (20.5%).

*Cataract extraction* was the highest volume Indicator procedure across all jurisdictions, other than Tasmania where *Cystoscopy* was the highest. *Myringoplasty* was the lowest volume indicator procedure for New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia and Tasmania (443, 433, 401, 115 and 14 admissions respectively). *Varicose vein stripping and ligation* was lowest for Western Australia (101 admissions) and *Haemorrhoidectomy* was lowest for the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory (25 and 10 admissions respectively).



(a) These data are supplied to the National Hospital Morbidity Database.  
(b) Separations for which the care type was reported as *Newborn* with no qualified days, and records for *Hospital boarders* and *Posthumous organ procurement* have been excluded.  
Abbreviations: CC—complications and comorbidities; Cat—Catastrophic; Sev—severe; OR—operating room; W/O—without; ALOS—average length of stay.

**Figure 6.1: Interrelationships of a specialty of surgeon (Plastic surgery) with other data elements, all hospitals, 2006-07**



**Table 6.1: Waiting time statistics for patients admitted from waiting lists for elective surgery, by public hospital peer group, Australia, 2002–03 to 2006–07**

	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07
<b>Principal referral and Specialist women's &amp; children's hospitals</b>					
Number of reporting hospitals <sup>(a)</sup>	69	68	75	78	82
Estimated coverage of surgical separations (%) <sup>(b)</sup>	99	99	99	99	98
Number of admissions <sup>(c)</sup>	339,370	343,430	372,085	386,203	394,831
Days waited at 50th percentile	26	27	28	30	30
Days waited at 90th percentile	182	182	203	228	225
% waited more than 365 days	3.9	3.9	4.6	4.7	3.4
<b>Large hospitals</b>					
Number of reporting hospitals <sup>(a)</sup>	41	42	36	34	30
Estimated coverage of surgical separations (%) <sup>(b)</sup>	82	85	82	81	77
Number of admissions <sup>(c)</sup>	108,742	110,284	100,916	97,816	88,433
Days waited at 50th percentile	31	30	29	35	33
Days waited at 90th percentile	213	206	227	251	224
% waited more than 365 days	4.2	4.2	4.8	4.6	2.7
<b>Medium hospitals</b>					
Number of reporting hospitals <sup>(a)</sup>	56	58	59	51	52
Estimated coverage of surgical separations (%) <sup>(b)</sup>	52	59	62	62	63
Number of admissions <sup>(c)</sup>	59,109	68,790	69,830	63,641	63,658
Days waited at 50th percentile	34	34	37	38	39
Days waited at 90th percentile	234	215	272	257	231
% waited more than 365 days	3.6	3.3	6.1	3.8	1.7
<b>Total<sup>(d)</sup></b>					
Number of reporting hospitals <sup>(a)</sup>	199	196	195	191	192
Estimated coverage of surgical separations (%) <sup>(b)</sup>	85	87	87	87	87
Number of admissions <sup>(c)</sup>	517,503	528,949	549,746	556,951	556,770
Admissions per 1,000 population <sup>(e)</sup>	26.2	26.5	27.2	27.2	26.7
Days waited at 50th percentile	28	28	29	32	32
Days waited at 90th percentile	197	193	217	237	226
% waited more than 365 days	4.0	3.9	4.8	4.6	3.1

(a) Number of hospitals reporting to the National Elective Surgery Waiting Times Data Collection. See Appendix 2 for further information.

(b) This is the number of separations with an Urgency of admission reported as *Elective* and a surgical procedure for public hospitals reporting to the National Elective Surgery Waiting Times Data Collection as a proportion of the number of separations with an Urgency of admission reported as *Elective* and a surgical procedure for all public hospitals.

(c) Number of admissions for elective surgery reported to the National Elective Surgery Waiting Times Data Collection.

(d) Includes data for hospitals not included in the specified hospital peer groups and some private hospitals contracted to do elective surgery.

(e) Crude rate based on the Australian estimated resident population as at 31 December of the period in question.

**Table 6.2: Waiting time statistics for patients admitted from waiting lists for elective surgery, by hospital peer group, states and territories, 2006-07**

	NSW	Vic	Qld <sup>(a)</sup>	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
<b>Principal referral and Specialist women's &amp; children's hospitals</b>									
Number of reporting hospitals <sup>(b)</sup>	29	20	17	5	5	3	1	2	82
Estimated coverage of elective surgical separations (%) <sup>(c)</sup>	100	100	97	84	100	100	100	100	98
Number of admissions <sup>(d)</sup>	134,093	86,679	91,827	26,002	31,705	14,181	5,129	5,215	394,631
Days waited at 50th percentile	31	29	26	29	39	38	n.p.	31	30
Days waited at 90th percentile	259	224	149	223	207	343	n.p.	363	225
% waited more than 365 days	2.3	4.0	2.6	5.0	3.8	9.2	n.p.	9.8	3.4
<b>Large hospitals</b>									
Number of reporting hospitals <sup>(b)</sup>	12	8	5	2	2	..	1	..	30
Estimated coverage of elective surgical separations (%) <sup>(c)</sup>	100	70	100	42	100	..	100	..	77
Number of admissions <sup>(d)</sup>	24,825	33,713	11,658	8,571	5,489	..	4,177	..	88,433
Days waited at 50th percentile	39	33	22	23	43	..	n.p.	..	33
Days waited at 90th percentile	266	195	96	233	201	..	n.p.	..	224
% waited more than 365 days	1.3	2.3	1.9	3.8	4.5	..	n.p.	..	2.7
<b>Medium hospitals</b>									
Number of reporting hospitals <sup>(b)</sup>	37	4	7	4	0	..	..	..	52
Estimated coverage of elective surgical separations (%) <sup>(c)</sup>	100	35	81	80	0	..	..	..	63
Number of admissions <sup>(d)</sup>	36,573	11,277	4,090	11,718	n.a.	..	..	..	63,658
Days waited at 50th percentile	50	28	27	28	n.a.	..	..	..	39
Days waited at 90th percentile	271	137	125	209	n.a.	..	..	..	231
% waited more than 365 days	1.1	1.2	1.1	4.2	n.a.	..	..	..	1.7
<b>Total<sup>(e)</sup></b>									
Number of reporting hospitals <sup>(b)</sup>	99	32	31	13	7	3	2	5	192
Estimated coverage of elective surgical separations (%) <sup>(c)</sup>	100	79	96	67	64	100	100	100	87
Number of admissions <sup>(d)</sup>	201,630	131,669	107,893	48,986	37,194	14,181	9,306	5,911	556,770
Admissions per 1,000 population <sup>(f)</sup>	29.4	25.5	26.1	23.5	23.6	28.8	27.7	27.8	26.7
Days waited at 50th percentile	35	30	25	29	40	38	63	35	32
Days waited at 90th percentile	260	208	142	225	206	343	364	370	226
% waited more than 365 days	1.9	3.3	2.5	4.6	3.9	9.2	9.9	10.2	3.1

(a) The total number of admissions for Queensland includes 641 admissions that were removed from the waiting list for elective admission before 30 June 2006 and separated before 30 June 2007. It is expected that these admissions would be counterbalanced overall by the number of admissions occurring in a similar way in future reporting periods.

(b) Number of hospitals reporting to the National Elective Surgery Waiting Times Data Collection. See Appendix 2 for further information.

(c) The number of separations with an Urgency of admission reported as *Elective* and a surgical procedure for public hospitals reporting to the National Elective Surgery Waiting Times Data Collection as a proportion of the number of separations with an Urgency of admission reported as *Elective* and a surgical procedure for all public hospitals.

(d) Number of admissions for elective surgery reported to the National Elective Surgery Waiting Times Data Collection.

(e) Includes data for hospitals not included in the specified hospital peer groups.

(f) Crude rate based on the Australian estimated resident population as at 31 December 2006.

**Table 6.3: Additions to waiting lists, and waiting time statistics for patients removed from waiting lists for elective surgery, by reason for removal, states and territories, 2006–07**

	NSW	Vic	Qld <sup>(a)</sup>	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
<b>Additions</b>	230,660	149,057	222,661	55,411	42,432	17,525	11,186	5,783	734,715
<b>Removals<sup>(b)</sup></b>									
<b>Effective admission</b>	201,630	131,669	107,893	48,986	37,194	14,181	9,306	5,911	556,770
Days waited at 50th percentile	35	30	25	29	40	38	63	35	32
Days waited at 90th percentile	260	208	142	225	206	343	364	370	226
% waited more than 365 days	1.9	3.3	2.5	4.6	3.9	9.2	9.9	10.2	3.1
<b>Emergency admission</b>	1,511	881	2,829	249	291	120	0	28	5,909
Days waited at 50th percentile	11	8	0	19	21	31	..	22	1
Days waited at 90th percentile	113	106	19	113	119	243	..	638	71
% waited more than 365 days	0.4	1.8	0.2	4.0	2.7	5.8	..	21.4	1.0
<b>Not contactable/died</b>	3,313	2,254	1,083	946	461	775	204	n.a.	9,036
Days waited at 50th percentile	129	169	143	338	116	259	339	n.a.	169
Days waited at 90th percentile	353	546	847	692	403	1,002	1,299	n.a.	572
% waited more than 365 days	8.0	21.7	30.5	46.2	14.1	36.3	47.1	n.a.	21.7
<b>Treated elsewhere</b>	10,264	3,634	4,221	1,274	810	489	323	n.a.	21,015
Days waited at 50th percentile	82	79	83	155	80	186	132	n.a.	86
Days waited at 90th percentile	302	366	483	491	361	585	483	n.a.	350
% waited more than 365 days	3.0	10.0	14.9	21.9	9.8	26.4	16.4	n.a.	8.8
<b>Surgery not required or declined</b>	17,074	14,232	7,032	4,265	2,614	1,103	964	n.a.	47,284
Days waited at 50th percentile	118	96	69	220	101	228	214	n.a.	108
Days waited at 90th percentile	345	455	466	563	407	777	732	n.a.	433
% waited more than 365 days	7.1	14.7	14.3	30.8	12.5	35.1	29.9	n.a.	14.0
<b>Transferred to another hospital's waiting list</b>	n.a.	2,104	n.a.	2,795	n.a.	n.a.	292	n.a.	5,191
Days waited at 50th percentile	n.a.	87	n.a.	150	n.a.	n.a.	191	n.a.	118
Days waited at 90th percentile	n.a.	278	n.a.	476	n.a.	n.a.	848	n.a.	418
% waited more than 365 days	n.a.	5.7	n.a.	19.0	n.a.	n.a.	27.1	n.a.	14.0
<b>Not reported</b>	3	1,275	n.a.	1,143	1,514	276	0	1,557	5,768
Days waited at 50th percentile	n.p.	40	n.a.	51	122	182	..	296	108
Days waited at 90th percentile	n.p.	335	n.a.	522	514	692	..	1,393	692
% waited more than 365 days	n.p.	7.8	n.a.	18.5	22.0	27	..	45.2	24.6
<b>Total removals</b>	233,795	156,049	123,058	59,658	42,884	16,944	11,089	7,496	650,973
Days waited at 50th percentile	40	35	27	37	43	49	77	52	36
Days waited at 90th percentile	280	247	175	336	250	438	451	582	269
% waited more than 365 days	2.4	4.8	3.8	8.5	5.3	12.9	13.0	17.5	4.6

(a) The total number of removals for Queensland includes 761 patients who were removed from the waiting list for elective or emergency admission before 30 June 2006 and separated before 30 June 2007. It is expected that these admissions would be counterbalanced overall by the number of admissions occurring in a similar way in future reporting periods.

(b) See the Glossary for a full description of these categories.

Table 6.4: Waiting time statistics for patients admitted from waiting lists for elective surgery, by specialty of surgeon, states and territories, 2006-07

	NSW	Vic	Qld <sup>(a)</sup>	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
<b>Cardio-thoracic surgery</b>									
Admissions	3,950	2,541	3,615	3,221	832	441	231	0	14,831
Days waited at 50th percentile	12	7	12	13	18	27	24	..	12
Days waited at 90th percentile	62	63	82	40	74	173	87	..	66
% waited more than 365 days	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.5	0.0	..	0.1
<b>Ear, nose &amp; throat surgery</b>									
Admissions	14,432	12,507	9,628	3,607	4,111	878	914	635	46,712
Days waited at 50th percentile	69	39	23	90	54	57	105	50	46
Days waited at 90th percentile	335	204	159	431	312	521	803	546	308
% waited more than 365 days	4.1	3.5	3.6	13.5	7.4	12.9	23.1	14.8	5.5
<b>General surgery</b>									
Admissions	56,491	31,099	26,759	10,302	8,328	3,428	1,519	1,729	139,655
Days waited at 50th percentile	28	29	26	25	33	29	29	53	28
Days waited at 90th percentile	158	183	124	177	158	268	164	326	162
% waited more than 365 days	0.7	2.8	2.1	3.5	2.4	6.9	1.5	7.8	2.0
<b>Gynaecology</b>									
Admissions	28,470	14,949	16,167	3,517	5,702	2,143	1,204	1,647	73,799
Days waited at 50th percentile	29	36	24	21	32	38	39	7	28
Days waited at 90th percentile	145	143	97	94	119	238	209	81	130
% waited more than 365 days	0.7	1.2	0.8	0.2	0.3	3.7	1.8	1.2	0.9
<b>Neurosurgery</b>									
Admissions	3,632	2,529	1,424	2,262	631	218	248	0	10,944
Days waited at 50th percentile	23	21	15	42	21	38	29	..	26
Days waited at 90th percentile	130	162	158	169	89	505	296	..	154
% waited more than 365 days	0.9	1.7	4.0	1.1	0.2	11.9	7.7	..	1.9
<b>Ophthalmology</b>									
Admissions	24,740	16,472	8,927	5,851	4,225	998	1,232	670	63,115
Days waited at 50th percentile	123	36	34	77	68	54	173	255	71
Days waited at 90th percentile	339	228	268	304	278	528	510	643	318
% waited more than 365 days	3.5	1.1	4.8	6.7	4.6	23.6	27.7	36.3	4.6
<b>Orthopaedic surgery</b>									
Admissions	31,378	17,155	21,352	6,639	4,375	2,273	1,358	561	85,091
Days waited at 50th percentile	65	63	25	52	69	123	123	49	50
Days waited at 90th percentile	330	340	175	301	345	561	403	399	318
% waited more than 365 days	4.2	8.6	3.5	6.6	9.2	22.5	12.3	11.9	6.0

(continued)

**Table 6.4 (continued): Waiting time statistics for patients admitted from waiting lists for elective surgery, by specialty of surgeon, states and territories, 2006–07**

	NSW	Vic	Qld <sup>(a)</sup>	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
<b>Plastic surgery</b>									
Admissions	8,821	12,090	7,802	4,037	3,954	1,411	486	74	38,675
Days waited at 50th percentile	28	23	29	29	37	22	62	42	28
Days waited at 90th percentile	167	213	135	312	182	166	371	315	193
% waited more than 365 days	1.3	4.5	2.0	8.2	4.1	3.7	10.1	8.1	3.6
<b>Urology</b>									
Admissions	21,020	16,041	8,168	7,156	3,921	1,938	1,052	93	59,389
Days waited at 50th percentile	28	21	27	19	44	33	52	50	26
Days waited at 90th percentile	167	151	127	133	177	148	237	407	158
% waited more than 365 days	1.4	2.7	2.3	3.1	4.1	2.1	3.4	11.8	2.3
<b>Vascular surgery</b>									
Admissions	4,998	2,457	2,050	1,031	884	289	376	0	12,085
Days waited at 50th percentile	17	25	20	20	12	43	27	..	20
Days waited at 90th percentile	89	273	84	103	71	242	482	..	133
% waited more than 365 days	0.5	6.3	1.6	1.1	1.5	4.2	11.4	..	2.4
<b>Other<sup>(b)</sup></b>									
Admissions	3,698	3,829	2,001	1,363	231	164	686	502	12,474
Days waited at 50th percentile	6	23	29	13	21	12	36	20	15
Days waited at 90th percentile	46	86	122	42	82	54	151	251	90
% waited more than 365 days	0.1	0.4	0.6	0.3	0.4	0.6	2.0	5.4	0.6
<b>Total</b>									
Admissions	201,630	131,669	107,893	48,986	37,194	14,181	9,306	5,911	556,770
Days waited at 50th percentile	35	30	25	29	40	38	63	35	32
Days waited at 90th percentile	260	208	142	225	206	343	364	370	226
% waited more than 365 days	1.9	3.3	2.5	4.6	3.9	9.2	9.9	10.2	3.1

(a) The total number of admissions for Queensland includes 641 patients who were removed from the waiting list for elective admission before 30 June 2006 and separated before 30 June 2007. It is expected that these admissions would be counterbalanced overall by the number of admissions occurring in a similar way in future reporting periods.

(b) Includes specialty of surgeon of *Not reported*.

**Table 6.5: Waiting time statistics for patients admitted from waiting lists for elective surgery, by indicator procedure, states and territories, 2006–07**

	NSW	Vic	Qld <sup>(a)</sup>	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
<b>Cataract extraction</b>									
Admissions	19,730	11,226	5,915	4,223	2,462	583	1,126	467	45,732
Days waited at 50th percentile	152	50	40	85	96	111	177	320	93
Days waited at 90th percentile	343	237	292	297	288	625	516	641	330
% waited more than 365 days	3.9	0.8	5.8	6.3	3.9	35.7	29.3	40.3	5.0
<b>Cholecystectomy</b>									
Admissions	7,254	3,994	3,353	1,013	887	393	204	135	17,233
Days waited at 50th percentile	47	45	38	32	36	61	71	111	43
Days waited at 90th percentile	202	170	133	279	107	258	239	503	182
% waited more than 365 days	1.2	1.8	1.1	5.2	0.0	6.4	2.9	14.1	1.7
<b>Coronary artery bypass graft</b>									
Admissions	1,206	930	1,427	291	427	256	134	0	4,671
Days waited at 50th percentile	15	9	15	26	24	43	19	..	17
Days waited at 90th percentile	76	80	91	67	83	196	77	..	88
% waited more than 365 days	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.4	0	..	0.1
<b>Cystoscopy</b>									
Admissions	14,195	9,419	4,261	3,684	1,722	684	595	161	34,721
Days waited at 50th percentile	25	21	29	16	42	35	66	48	25
Days waited at 90th percentile	151	141	168	167	195	146	257	260	157
% waited more than 365 days	1.0	2.0	3.1	3.4	5.1	0.9	4.0	7.5	2.1
<b>Haemorrhoidectomy</b>									
Admissions	1,489	958	496	219	292	34	25	10	3,523
Days waited at 50th percentile	44	53	42	36	32	94	81	n.p.	44
Days waited at 90th percentile	237	265	201	359	158	298	160	n.p.	241
% waited more than 365 days	2.1	3.7	4.8	8.2	0.7	8.8	0.0	n.p.	3.3
<b>Hysterectomy</b>									
Admissions	4,080	2,236	1,743	737	476	309	136	42	9,759
Days waited at 50th percentile	45	43	36	32	52	62	53	32	43
Days waited at 90th percentile	204	146	116	118	154	241	252	129	165
% waited more than 365 days	1.0	1.1	1.2	0.4	0.4	3.2	4.4	4.8	1.1
<b>Inguinal herniorrhaphy</b>									
Admissions	6,140	3,331	1,931	1,140	756	382	209	105	13,994
Days waited at 50th percentile	48	45	40	32	47	77	79	77	45
Days waited at 90th percentile	231	198	168	232	141	424	224	362	217
% waited more than 365 days	1.2	2.4	2.4	5.0	1.5	13.6	1.4	9.5	2.4

(continued)

Table 6.5 (continued): Waiting time statistics for patients admitted from waiting lists for elective surgery, by indicator procedure, states and territories, 2006–07

	NSW	Vic	Qld <sup>(a)</sup>	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
<b>Myringoplasty</b>									
Admissions	443	433	401	183	115	14	28	36	1,653
Days waited at 50th percentile	125	62	62	143	186	154	252	440	93
Days waited at 90th percentile	354	278	379	485	434	1,106	952	863	378
% waited more than 365 days	6.5	6.2	11.0	14.8	22.6	28.6	35.7	58.3	11.4
<b>Myringotomy</b>									
Admissions	454	2,142	1,747	618	877	76	165	20	6,099
Days waited at 50th percentile	42	28	38	68	49	37	61	13	39
Days waited at 90th percentile	232	92	150	301	133	114	321	116	152
% waited more than 365 days	1.1	0.2	1.1	5.5	0.6	0.0	6.1	5.0	1.3
<b>Prostatectomy</b>									
Admissions	2,648	2,048	1,052	479	506	41	98	13	6,885
Days waited at 50th percentile	44	23	28	23	55	51	30	45	35
Days waited at 90th percentile	223	225	128	122	232	83	218	441	206
% waited more than 365 days	2.6	5.2	1.9	1.9	4.3	0.0	5.1	15.4	3.4
<b>Septoplasty</b>									
Admissions	1,390	1,425	626	304	211	44	126	28	4,154
Days waited at 50th percentile	203	75	56	159	129	n.p.	167	205	113
Days waited at 90th percentile	370	376	545	561	354	n.p.	851	1,814	405
% waited more than 365 days	11.4	10.7	16.9	19.1	9.5	n.p.	29.4	42.9	13.6
<b>Tonsillectomy</b>									
Admissions	4,166	3,437	2,452	1,057	994	62	260	119	12,547
Days waited at 50th percentile	123	53	42	112	80	117	194	154	75
Days waited at 90th percentile	345	199	183	461	364	1,278	943	683	332
% waited more than 365 days	4.3	2.0	3.8	17.5	9.8	35.5	35.8	20.2	6.1
<b>Total hip replacement</b>									
Admissions	2,725	1,681	1,347	624	539	235	223	22	7,396
Days waited at 50th percentile	134	132	62	83	111	244	140	164	106
Days waited at 90th percentile	356	361	245	326	468	617	330	413	358
% waited more than 365 days	5.9	9.4	5.3	7.1	16.5	38.3	8.1	27.3	8.6
<b>Total knee replacement</b>									
Admissions	4,770	1,916	1,889	931	641	226	199	22	10,594
Days waited at 50th percentile	221	170	74	115	171	392	233	203	162
Days waited at 90th percentile	365	437	343	399	559	654	527	434	390
% waited more than 365 days	9.9	15.6	9.0	12.0	28.5	54.0	24.1	36.4	13.4

(continued)

Table 6.5 (continued): Waiting time statistics for patients admitted from waiting lists for elective surgery, by indicator procedure, states and territories, 2006–07

	NSW	Vic	Qld <sup>(a)</sup>	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
<b>Varicose veins stripping &amp; ligation</b>									
Admissions	1,613	1,411	602	101	290	30	104	30	4,181
Days waited at 50th percentile	59	109	77	51	284	39	218	305	83
Days waited at 90th percentile	230	431	770	336	747	254	957	1,269	426
% waited more than 365 days	1.9	14.0	22.6	8.9	35.5	3.3	41.3	46.7	12.8
<b>Not applicable/not stated</b>									
Admissions	129,327	85,082	78,651	33,382	25,999	10,812	5,674	4,701	373,628
Days waited at 50th percentile	26	26	21	24	33	32	38	26	26
Days waited at 90th percentile	184	189	114	183	163	280	239	246	174
% waited more than 365 days	1.2	3.3	1.8	3.8	2.7	6.9	5.1	5.9	2.4
<b>Total</b>									
Admissions	201,630	131,669	107,893	48,986	37,194	14,181	9,306	5,911	556,770
Days waited at 50th percentile	35	30	25	29	40	38	63	35	32
Days waited at 90th percentile	260	208	142	225	206	343	364	370	226
% waited more than 365 days	1.9	3.3	2.5	4.6	3.9	9.2	9.9	10.2	3.1

(a) The total number of admissions for Queensland includes 641 patients who were removed from the waiting list for elective admission before 30 June 2006 and separated before 30 June 2007. It is expected that these admissions would be counterbalanced overall by the number of admissions occurring in a similar way in future reporting periods.